



# Spotlight on Redevelopment

An Online Newsletter of the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency

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## Redevelopment Agency Board June Meeting Schedule

### Upcoming Meetings

June 12 Meeting Cancelled  
June 26 Meeting--9:00 a.m.

City Council Chambers  
Long Beach City Hall  
333 Ocean Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA

Agendas for meetings  
are available at:

[http://www.longbeach.gov/cd/redevelopment/agency\\_agendas.asp](http://www.longbeach.gov/cd/redevelopment/agency_agendas.asp)

## Mayor Beverly O'Neill to Host First Annual Redevelopment Agency Event

Mayor Beverly O'Neill will be hosting the Redevelopment Agency Board's First Annual Citywide Town Hall Event on June 19, 2006 at The Grand Event Center.

The event, the first of its kind for the Redevelopment Agency, will act as a chance for residents to interact with the Redevelopment Agency Board and staff, learn about upcoming priorities in the 2007 budget and hear how redevelopment is playing a key role in changing the economic dynamics in Long Beach.

The highlight of the event will be a

panel discussion moderated by Economic Development Bureau Manager Robert Swayze, who will be leading a group of Long Beach experts in a discussion of the future of development in the city. The panelists will include developers, political leaders, affordable housing advocates and others.

The event is also an opportunity for the public to ask questions of the Board and staff and share any concerns they have..

"This will be an exciting and key

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## New City Parking Administrator Takes on Challenging Role

Ask anyone who frequents downtown Long Beach on a Saturday night what they would like to change about the experience and chances are they would mention "parking".

Business and city leaders have struggled for years to keep up with the expanding need for parking for residents and visitors patronizing area businesses and entertainment venues in downtown Long Beach. Many business leaders have long cited it as their major challenge to expansion and meeting the needs of their customers.

The city is working closely with the Downtown Long Beach Association and other area leaders to develop solutions and this March hired an expert parking administrator for the city, a sign of how seriously the city takes the challenge of solving local business needs in the area.

Luis Maldonado, a highly regarded parking expert in Southern California, joined the city's staff in

March of this year and has taken on some of the immediate challenges facing the city.

"It was baptism by fire," said Maldonado, Parking Operations Administrator with the Community Development Department. "My first day on the job I was asked to speak to the board of the Downtown Long Beach Association and they didn't hold back in telling me what is wrong with downtown parking."

"They asked me if the city was serious about fixing the problems," said Maldonado. "I said yes, and they way you know that is because they put

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## Annual Town Hall Event

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event in the city each year and something residents will not want to miss," added Fields. "Everyone should consider attending who has an interest or a stake in how Long Beach is being developed and what they want our city to be in the future."

The Redevelopment Agency will also present three Project Area Advocate of the Year awards.

The First Annual Citywide Town Hall Event is open to all members of the public and will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Monday June 19<sup>th</sup> at The Grand Event Center at 4101 E. Willows Street in Long Beach. There is free parking and plenty of food and drink will be provided.

## Redevelopment Agency Board Votes to End Night Meetings

The Redevelopment Agency Board voted in May to suspend night meetings beginning in June 2006, ending a five month trial of the new schedule, which sought to increase public participation by holding one night meeting a month.

The schedule change was one of a number of changes the Redevelopment Agency has made this year to increase its public outreach.

Given that the Redevelopment Agency Board did not see a noticeable increase in attendance at the night meetings, the schedule will revert to its previous schedule of two meetings a month, the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, both held at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers.

## City Taking Immediate Steps to Solve Parking Squeeze

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the time and money into hiring me. Creating this position shows you how much the city wants to work with you and fix these problems."

According to Maldonado downtown faces a number of challenges, such as the perception that it doesn't have enough parking. Maldonado says there is parking, it's just a couple blocks away. "That might be fine in the evening when people have more time to walk from their cars", said Maldonado, "but for the lunch crowd people don't want to take the time to park and walk means they may avoid downtown on their lunch hour."

Another problem, according to Maldonado, is the pricing structure. Unlike most cities, he says, Long Beach's downtown is priced so that the street spaces are cheaper than the lots, causing people to drive around looking for street space, which causes congestion. He is looking to re-price the parking so that lots are cheaper.

The city is working with local businesses on one immediate solution; they are moving the valet stands to Broadway after 5:00 p.m. Right now there are four valet stands on Pine Avenue, which

causes congestion at night. But moving them a short way away opens up space and availability.

"The great thing is that in my last job they didn't realize they had a parking problem," said Maldonado. "Long Beach knows it has a parking problem and is committed to solving it."

There is no question that the city needs more parking spaces downtown," said Maldonado. "we probably need another 2500-3000 spaces in the next 5-7 years." Building parking is expensive though, says Maldonado. A space on the street costs roughly \$2500 to build. A space in a structure costs about \$20,000 per space. And underground parking is \$40,000-45,000 per space.

"It's not cheap to solve parking problems but there are a lot of ways to improve the parking we already have through tighter controls on pricing, maintenance, enforcement and other factors that improve people's parking options," he added.

"We are working closely with businesses to keep the flow of customers steady," said Maldonado. "The city wants businesses to be happy and succeed in downtown Long Beach and we will do everything we can to make this work."